Standard Tariff package for fixed telephony in rural areas and cost-based tariff fixation for domestic and international leased circuits.

(c) No, Sir.

Jobs generated

1823. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate figure of jobs generated under the Communication and Information Technology in the country till the end of 2006;

(b) the actual number of Community Information Centres (CICs) throughout the country and their functional status as on date; and

(c) the achievements made through CICs in taking IT education to the common people to bridge the urban-rural gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) As per NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Service Companies) total employment in software and services (excluding Hardware) estimated to be 16.3 lakhs in 2006-07. The employment in the Hardware Industry as on March, 2006 was about 4.2 lakhs.

(b) and (c) Department of Information Technology (DIT) has taken up an initiative for setting up of Community Information Centres (CICs) in the hilly and far-flung areas of the country to bring the benefits of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to the people for socio-economic development of these regions and to alleviate the digital divide between urban and non-urban areas. A total of 693 CICs have been set up in 8 North-Eastern-States, J&K, Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep.

The CICs provide basic services like Internet browsing, e-mail and training to local community in computer fundamentals. CICs also provide several Government to Citizen (G2C)/Citizen Centric services. Selected CICs also conduct the Course on Computer Concepts (CCC) of DOEACC Society and Computer Literacy Programme (CLP) of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). A total of 223615 persons in North-Eastern States

and 4406 persons in J&K have been trained on basic computer concepts through CICs.

Penalty on telecom operators

1824. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are all set to impose a penalty of Rs. 400 crore on seven telecom operators for not fulfilling the roll-out obligations as per their licence conditions as the operators are required to cover 10 per cent of total number of districts in an area of operations within one year from the effective date of licence and they should ensure that at least 90 per cent of these districts, including inside buildings is given coverage; and

(b) if so, whether none of these companies have submitted the required certificate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) As on date, 29 companies are holding 159 licences to provide Telecom Access Services in the 23 service areas in the country. These Licensees are required to fulfill roll-out obligations according to their respective licence agreements. For any delay in fulfillment of these obligations, as per the licence agreement, there is provision for imposing Liquidated Damages (LD).

Regarding fulfillment of the roll-out obligations the licensees are required to submit certificates issued by Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC). The compliance of licence conditions, including roll-out obligations, are reviewed from time to time.

So far LD has been imposed on more than 40 licensees for non-fulfillment of roll-out obligations.

STD calls at local rates

1825 SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that STD calls between Delhi-Mumbai are being charged at local rates;